

## Zionist Conversazione.

Mr. M. NATAS delivered an interesting lecture on "Jewish Humour" at the last fortnightly conversazione at the Zionist Hall on Tuesday night.

Humour, he said, was one of the most elemental and instinctive qualities in man, and was subconscious. In primitive man the sense of humour and its resultant laughter was wild and uncontrolled and was probably connected with a superiority complex. It was aroused by physical and bodily causes, and had its roots to a large extent in the antagonism always felt towards an alien and outsider.

This primitive form of humour developed into the higher type which adds a zest and sparkle to life and makes it richer and more full of meaning.

Humour, said the lecturer, was a social phenomenon and could only exist where a number of people live together. Humour could teach us more about a people than anything else. The humour of the Jewish people is characteristic. It can already be found in the Bible, while in the Talmud there is a wealth of wit and humour. After the completion of the Talmud there was no humour, for the Jews did not come in contact with the outside world, but later a deep and characteristic form of humour developed.

Humour can teach us a great deal about the psychology of a people. Jewish wit is clever and sharp, yet contains a large degree of pathos. The greatness of Jewish humour lies in the fact that when they discovered the emptiness of the Galuth life, they had to find something to lighten the gloom. The lecturer illustrated this by a number of typical jokes which aroused a great deal of laughter.

The lecturer went on to deal with Bergson's and Freud's analysis of humour and showed how they had much in common. The characteristic, typical jokes of the Jewish people, he said, showed that they knew and understood themselves. Their sense of humour gave them courage to face their troubles and difficulties and not to become dejected. They humanised the humour of the body and created a healthy criticism of their own faults and foibles. No people was so earnest as the Jews and none had so much wit and humour. It might be that this wit and humour was unnatural, but he hoped that in Eretz Israel a new, fresh and healthy form of humour would be created and bring new energy into Jewish life.

Dr. J. Sachs, Dr. H. W. Altschul and Mr. B. L. Rubik took part in the discussion, to which Mr. Natas replied.

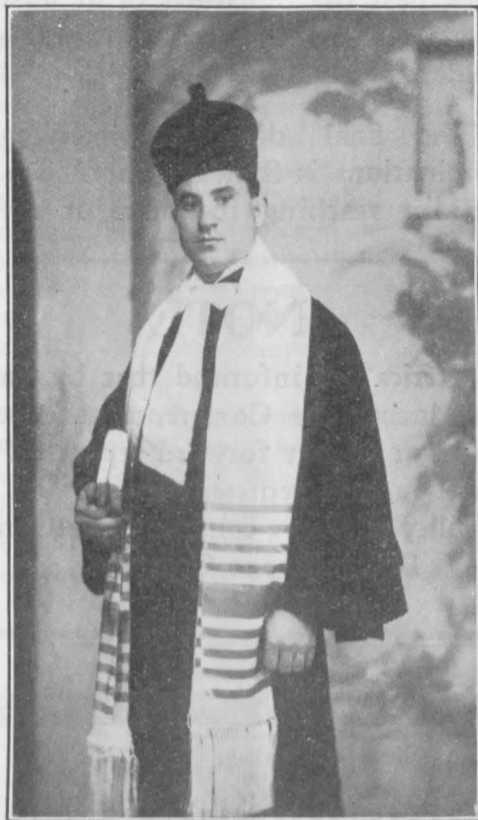
Mr. J. Gitlin was in the chair.

Mr. Koorland contributed a pianoforte solo and Miss Shulman (of Johannesburg) violin solos, which were very much appreciated.

## Cantor S. Kugel.

Cantor S. Kugel, the newly-appointed Chazan of the New Hebrew Congregation, arrived from England in the "Winchester Castle" on Monday and was met by the President, Mr. M. Alexander, K.C., M.P., the Vice-President, Mr. I. Shuel; the Treasurer, Mr. M. Walt, and Messrs. Ch. B. Levinsohn and R. Weinberg.

In the evening the committee met at the residence of Mr. Morris Jacobson, a member of the committee for the purpose of making the acquaintance of Cantor Kugel. Mr. M. Alexander, Mr. I. Shuel and Mr. Ch. B. Levinsohn extended a welcome on behalf of the Congregation.



Cantor Kugel was born in Russia and brought up in Palestine where he attended the *Yeshiva Or Zoreah* in Neve Zedek, Jaffa. He completed his musical education at the Milan Conservatorium where he spent six years. Returning to Palestine, he took up a position on the staff of the Palestine Conservatorium in Jerusalem as a teacher of voice culture.

Five months ago he left for London at the invitation of the Columbia Graphophone Co., for whom he made several records of modern Hebrew music. He has given a number of concerts in the larger cities of England and Scotland and has been very well received.

Cantor Kugel will conduct the Sabbath services at the Roeland Street Synagogue to-night and to-morrow morning.

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